

February 11, 2009

Montana legislator pushes for horse slaughterhouse

By The Associated Press

HELENA - A state legislator says the country needs a horse slaughterhouse and that Montana would be a good place for one.

Republican Rep. Ed Butcher's bill declares the state open for that type of business and attempts to reassure potential investors perhaps skittish following recent closure of the country's last equine slaughterhouse. Cavel International Inc. shut down its DeKalb, Ill., operation after the U.S. 7th Circuit Court of Appeals in 2007 upheld an Illinois law prohibiting slaughter of horses for human consumption.

<http://www.billingsgazette.net/articles/2009/02/11/news/state/22-legislaturehorse.txt>

February 20, 2009

Panel OKs bill to allow horse slaughtering

By MIKE DENNISON
Gazette State Bureau

HELENA - A bill to allow and encourage horse-slaughtering plants in Montana has advanced to the House floor, winning approval Thursday from the House Agriculture Committee.

House Bill 418, sponsored by Rep. Ed Butcher, R-Winifred, says not only that private slaughterhouses for horses may be built in Montana, but also that a state court may not delay construction of a plant once the plant is licensed by the state.

<http://www.billingsgazette.net/articles/2009/02/20/news/state/45-horseslaughter.txt>

142 Comments

newt 3 weeks ago

People have been raising horses for food in Montana for a 100 years and in big numbers and the horses were not always old. It has always been a part of the ag industry. I don't understand why our industry hasn't taken these laws to court. Why discriminate against one aspect of the food chain. We pay association fees to groups who are afraid to stand up. Next it will be cattle or hogs or soybeans. If you don't meat anyway you are an eco-failure and a saprophite to working ecosystem. You are wrong and morally bankrupt. Ever been to central Illinois? Endless mono agriculture, genetically modified crops, chemicals, fields devoid of wildlife, fertilizer runoff to rivers, erosion of soil. My grazing lands support a plethora of wildlife. One of the last areas in the world where complex wildlife systems coexist with food production. **I think we should all get together and have a horse barbecue. Invite these out of touch people who are so wrong take them on socially, morally ,financially and stand up and,let them know they are dead wrong and don't know what think they know..**

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

Wile E 3 weeks ago

Sisyphus, the slaughter ban is less than 2 years old. **Taking old, crippled or useless horses to sell for slaughter was standard for many, many years prior.** It was only after the ban (as predicted) that the problem of surplus horses got worse, so your comment makes no sense. It is bleeding hearts that feel the need to stick their noses in other people's business that enacted the ban. What is next a cattle slaughter ban? Never mind I'm sure there are bleeding hearts out there right now working on that.

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

LDW 3 weeks ago

Sheila, Don't forget to call before you dig! or that horse that should have been slaughtered will be your most expensive one.

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

bdog 3 weeks ago

An Ed Butcher bill that I would support, hell must be freezing over.

carpediem 3 weeks ago

Indian tribes should consider opening horse slaughtering plants It will provide employment & infrastructure to the reservation.Horse meat is a delicacy in Europe & other countries.It is inhumane not to have plants in the USA.Horses are trucked to mexico in terrible traveling conditions.**The financial meltdown has made it very difficult for people that love their horses to feed & care for them.**As long as the slaughtering plants are managed in a safe & humane manner.

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

Obamination 3 weeks ago

If this keeps the liberals out, I say build them and then build some more.

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

Are you human? 3 weeks ago

Horses are livestock, yet our laws treat them like they are poodles. My goodness. Just because most Americans do not have a history of eating horse meat does not mean we ban the industry. If we do not allow horse slaughter, why not ban cattle, pig, and sheep? With sheep we are even cutting up the young ones because they are more tender. And we have a problem with horse slaughter? My goodness these PETA-esque wackos are out of control. **Good work Rep Butcher and good luck getting this through the legislature.**

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

montanavoter 3 weeks ago

We all need to leave a message for all members of the House Agriculture Committee urging them to vote for HB418. It is so much more humane for horses to have a place to go when they are injured or old and suffering. It is NOT humane to have horses you don't feed or take care of. All horses needs dental work so they can eat, they need their feet trimmed so they don't suffer from pain when they move, they need to be wormed so they can utilize their feed. They need feed and water every single day, not just when their owners can afford to feed them. People pushing against horse slaughter are hurting all horses. They are giving horses "no value" and people do not take care of an animal with no value. Drive through the country side or the outskirts of cities and see the horses penned up in small areas waiting for someone to feed and water them. Now that is not humane. **Thank You Ed Butcher for standing up for the rights of all horses and their owners.**

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

volleyball fanatic 3 weeks ago

Don't worry about the lunatics and tree huggers, pass the Bill.

Teve Torbes 3 weeks ago

I'm surprised but encouraged at all the positive comments on this idea. I figured this blog would be bleeding red with poor horsey stories. **It seems like good plan to me.**

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

sam 3 weeks ago

A horse slaughter house is a necessary part of ranching. While the bleeding hearts would rather see old or crippled horses live out their lives, ranching is a business and a useless horse is just a drain on the business. Horses are made to work and be useful. When they're not, it's time to go to the big pasture in the sky. Sadly, most that oppose a horse slaughter house are pro abortion. **They'd terminate a precious human life at the drop of a hat, but keep a crippled suffering old horse around past it's usefullness. It's a strange world isn't it?**

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

LDW 3 weeks ago

Amazed one- some of your information is misinformed, First of all these horse when shipped to market are not allowed to be double stacked, as are cattle, swine, or buffalo. If you have ever actually seen a load of these horses being transported you will have to admit that they are much calmer and more placid in the trailer than a load of cattle or buffalo. You stated that horsemeat is not used in dog food any more and the simple reason for that is they cannot be processed in the U.S. anymore Period! That includes your ideas of a rendering plant. You state that greed is breeding these horses. Once again you seem to be out of touch with reality. Sneaky neighbor horses, and the irresponsible attitude of half the people in Montana that have over an acre of ground thinking they need a horse is what breeds horses. Once again it is the misinformed or irresponsible horse owners that cause the increasing population of unwanted horses. People have cried that this will kill the tourist industry. You have to be kidding. The increase in Bed Tax at the Motels was quoted as being the end of our tourist trade. What you forget and refuse to accept is that we have many public and national attractions that cannot be found anywhere else in the world. These tourists are leaving the overpopulation of the cities, the smoke the noise and the traffic so that they can come overpopulate our national parks and decide what legislation needs to be done at the national level to ensure that we cannot use our public lands. The tourists if they are not unemployed and taxed to death will continue to come slaughterhouse or not. **If the slaughterhouse needs some land to build on I will happily sell the required parcel to them.**

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

newt 3 weeks ago

Everything I have is because of horses. My ancestors sold horses to the govt. I have a horse that saved my life. Horses are my life culture and first and last love...sometimes I wonder who is in charge around here but here are some facts. Horese are one of the most efficient converters of forage to protein. I have had colts gain 7 to 8 pounds a day on pasture. The meat is high in the right fats. Millions of people would enjoy the huge surplus of of horses if we could get them delivered. High quality-low cost protein. This horse thing is almost as hard to understand as the cow-hindu thing. I'm with Lefty when it comes to the representative but **I'd like to see such a plant started and would throw my support behind Butcher for the first time.**

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permal](#)

JBR 3 weeks ago

What a country,,,you can't kill a horse that, for whatever reason, has no usefull purpose,,,but you can get rid of a child.

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

newt 3 weeks ago

Sheila your condescending tone implies you don't know the Montana horse industry as well as you imply. Before I was out of school my best friend had the Hunter-Jumper of the Year in America. We have produced multiple champions. We have a horse that won the Wood Memorial. We have had national futurity winners and losers. And we are the low man on the Montana horse totem. Even good horses are worth 50 to 70 % less. The horse slaughter ban has drastically effected the value of all horses everywhere. And has seriously diminished the value of horse culture and tradition. **AQHA supports horse slaughter, APHA and numerous horse breed associations along with the major livestock associations support slaughter. I hope this turns into a constitutional issue.**
[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

River Rat 3 weeks ago

I have no desire to eat horse meat myself, but I know there is a market for it and has been for years. Bleeding hearts in eastern cities have closed the horse plants, and in doing so have created an untenable situation. **Now there are far too many horses in this country, many of them unwanted. This glut has ruined the horse market, has put some horse breeders out of business, has affected the price of hay, and is harming the landscape of the intermountain west.** Time for some common sense -- and it won't come from either coast.
[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

ccedriver 3 weeks ago

Hooray for Lefty the Cowboy! I beleive He has ben there and done that .Horse owner ,takes in a very wide swath of humanity, and not all of them are humane animal owners.**As I cross this state every day there are a great many canidates for the slaughter house.Bravo Mr. Butcher.** Get these animals off the land before they become ROADKILL. I can think off 3 accidents 1 with human fatallitys caused by canners! Go out to night and see how well a horse stands out in the dark, They don't! If we can not pass this one maybe one to make reflectors manditory on all horses and their owners address.
[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

Copper1 3 weeks ago

Its Nice to see Guys like ED from the good ole gods country of central Montana standing behind the people of Montana. **This is a bill that needs to pass for the good of horses and horseownwers** or all our old ranch horses are going to end up on publicland sooner or later.

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

No Way 3 weeks ago

Everyone wins with this bill: horses don't have to suffer so long, school kids get more glue, Chinese get horsemeat, workers get leather work gloves, dogs eat better puppy chow, slaughter people get jobs, etc. **The alternative is everyone and the horses loose.**
[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

LDW 3 weeks ago

Sheila I do know what your dressage is and thanks once again for pointing out your errors. First off your horse may be a compainion animal for YOU. Only you, as it is not my companion. Because you have a loyalty to your pets GREAT! Your feelings should not override reality. Reality is simple many horses have a rough life and their is no easy out for them. Reality is that a slaughter house gives a viable option for disposing of unwanted horse flesh. Horse flesh as you should know is an old saying and it was meant for far more than just another word for a horse. **The meat has a definat value. Simply put you can keep you pets and do not have to slaughter them. What gives you the right to control what others do with their livestock?**

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

j doug 3 weeks ago

It should be recalled that Temujin, who later came to be known as Genghis Khan, and his descendants created the largest empire that the world has ever known using horses and they didn't just ride them, they also ate them. I have been to Mongolia and they still eat them and I noticed when I was in France that they are fond of horse meat. Some think that the large breeds such as Belgium and Clydesdales were breed to be big to work. No, is was to produce more and better meat. **My question is why should my tax dollar be used to hold "wild" horses that did not get adopted in lots in WY. & NV. until they die. They are well cared for and well fed, as they should be under those conditions, but why?** Maybe Wild Horse Annie could answer that one. Willy Nelson lost a lot of fans over this issue, including me.

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

Gabby 3 weeks ago

I seldom agree with the Ed, but this makes sense. I would not sell any of my own horses to slaughter, but that is my choice. This should be supported by the "green" folk.

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permalink](#)

horsinaround 3 weeks ago

I have horses and have had one put to sleep and one taken to the sales ring, who most likely was sold to the slaughter house industry. I have to put my feeling aside for the horses on this issue. **It is far more humane to put a horse through the slaughter house than it is for them to starve to death.** Or worse be put down in unethical ways. Not everyone has a couple hundred dollars laying around to have a vet take care of them.

[Report as offensive](#) | [Permali](#)